

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

OMB-01 AID-05 TRSE-00 ACDA-05 MC-02 EB-07 /084 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/INS:DKUX:EI

APPROVED BY P:JJSISCO

NEA:ADUBS

S/S- MR. KUCHEL

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P R 102155Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 109693

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IN, US

SUBJECT: CALL BY INDIAN AMBASSADOR ON UNDER SECRETARY

1. SUMMARY: AT HIS INITIATIVE, INDIAN AMBASSADOR KAUL MET MAY 8 WITH UNDER SECRETARY SISCO. IN REVIEWING CURRENT STATE OF INDO-U.S. RELATIONS, SISCO STATED THAT RECENT INDIAN CRITICISM WAS CONTRIBUTING TO DOWNWARD SPIRAL IN BILATERAL RELATIONS. KAUL CLAIMED PRESS DISTORTING INDIAN STATEMENTS. ON MIDDLE EAST, SISCO NOTED OUR REVIEW CONTINUING, BUT SIGNS SEEMED TO POINT TOWARD CONVENING OF GENEVA CONFERENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. CONTINUING ROUND OF CALLS BEFORE MAY 18 DEPARTURE FOR CONSULTATIONS IN INDIA, INDIAN AMBASSADOR KAUL, ACCOMPANIED BY MINISTER RAMAKRISHNA, MET WITH UNDER SECRETARY SISCO MAY 8. DUBS AND KUX SAT IN.

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3. KAUL ALLUDED TO SISCO'S USE OF THE PHRASE "SELECTIVE ENGAGEMENT" IN LATTER'S GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY SPEECH AND ASKED UNDER SECRETARY HOW INDIA FITS INTO USG'S POST-VIETNAM ORDER OF PRIORITIES. SISCO STATED U.S. RECOGNIZED

THAT INDIA WAS KEY ELEMENT TO REGIONAL STABILITY AND THIS WAS FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTION OF OUR POLICY FOR SOUTH ASIA. SISCO SAID WE VIEWED INDIA AS FRIEND WITH WHOM WE WISHED GOOD RELATIONS AND THOUGHT THIS WAS IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST. WE SUPPORTED THE DESIGN OF THE SIMLA PROCESS TO BRING ABOUT

A RECONCILIATION BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND INDIA. WE ALSO TRIED TO BE HELPFUL IN ECONOMIC WAYS BUT OBVIOUSLY OUR RESOURCES ARE LIMITED AND WE WILL HAVE TO DEFINE PRIORITIES MORE SHARPLY THAN IN THE PAST. REALITIES IN POST-VIETNAM U.S. SITUATION, SISCO DECLARED, REQUIRE THAT WE BE MORE SELECTIVE IN ENGAGING OURSELVES. WE NEEDED TO RECOGNIZE LIMIT TO OUR RESOURCES AND CAPABILITIES.

4. KAUL SAID INDIA WELCOMED U.S. SUPPORT FOR SIMLA PROCESS AND HOPED WE COULD SHAPE MORE COOPERATIVE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP. HE DID NOT BELIEVE IN CONCEPT OF EQUIDISTANCE BETWEEN SUPER-POWERS, BUT THOUGHT INDIA SHOULD SHAPE ITS TIES ON BASIS OF RECIPROCITY. SISCO SAID THIS WAS ALSO OUR VIEW; FRIENDSHIP WAS A TWO-WAY STREET. SISCO AND KAUL AGREED THAT SO FAR INDIA AND U.S. HAD SOMEHOW BEEN UNABLE DESPITE MUCH IN COMMON TO FIND CORRECT FORMULA TO MAINTAIN STEADY COURSE IN OUR RELATIONS.

5. SISCO REACTED SHARPLY AND BLUNTLY TO RECENT CRITICAL REMARKS ON U.S. BY INDIAN LEADERS. WHILE SISCO SAID HE DID NOT WANT TO DEAL WITH SPECIFIC STATEMENTS, HE WISHED TO STRESS THAT IT WAS OUR JUDGMENT THAT CRITICISMS WERE UNHELPFUL, UNNECESSARY AND CONTRIBUTING TO DOWNWARD SPIRAL IN INDO-U.S. RELATIONS. INDIANS SHOULD BE UNDER NO ILLUSION ON THIS SCORE. THERE WAS AN ESPECIALLY BAD IMPACT ON CONGRESS.

6. KAUL CLAIMED THAT MUCH OF THE PROBLEM CAME FROM DISTORTED U.S. PRESS REPORTING OF WHAT INDIAN LEADERS WERE SAYING. MRS. GANDHI HAD RECENTLY PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGED CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT U.S. WAS LARGEST PROVIDER OF CREDIT TO INDIA AND EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR U.S. HELP. MOREOVER, MANY OF MRS. GANDHI'S REMARKS WERE ATTEMPT TO TAKE "CONSTRUCTIVE LONG-TERM VIEW." KAUL SAID SOME OF AMBASSADOR SAXBE'S REMARKS WERE ALSO NOT HELPFUL AND HAVE PROVOKED CRITICISM IN INDIA. "LET ME SAY," SISCO COMMENTED, "THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDS FIRMLY BEHIND AMBASSADOR SAXBE'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS."

7. KAUL ALSO REFERRED BRIEFLY TO U.S. ARMS SUPPLY POLICY FOR SOUTH ASIA. WHILE NOTING STRONG INDIAN OPPOSITION TO THE LIFTING OF THE ARMS EMBARGO, HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT U.S. WOULD KEEP INDIA INFORMED IN ADVANCE OF SALES AND

THIRD-COUNTRY TRANSFERS OF ARMS TO PAKISTAN, SAYING THAT GOI HAD BEEN GIVEN "ASSURANCES" TO THIS EFFECT. DUBS COMMENTED THAT FROM HIS READING OF BRIEFING MATERIAL ON THE ARMS EMBARGO ISSUE, HE WAS UNAWARE OF ANY U.S. COMMIT-

MENT TO INFORM INDIA IN ADVANCE OF ANY ARMS SALES OR ARMS TRANSFERS FROM THIRD COUNTRIES.

8. THERE WAS DISCUSSION OF U.S. POLICY IN ASIA IN LIGHT OF INDOCHINA DEVELOPMENTS. SISCO SAID U.S. INTENDED TO REMAIN ACTIVE IN REGION WHERE WE HAVE MANY INTERESTS AND THAT WE WOULD HONOR COMMITMENTS TO ALLIES.

9. KAUL ASKED ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE. SISCO SAID OVERALL REVIEW PROCESS WAS CONTINUING AND WE HAVE DRAWN NO FINAL CONCLUSIONS.

10. KAUL FELT THAT ROAD WAS POINTING TOWARD GENEVA. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT IF CONFERENCE WERE NOT CONVENED BEFORE UNGA SESSION, THERE WOULD BE MOVE TO OUST ISRAEL FROM UN. INDIA DID NOT AGREE WITH THIS AND TRIED TO CAUTION ITS ARAB FRIENDS. SISCO TOOK NOTE OF KAUL'S COMMENT ABOUT INDIAN OPPOSITION TO A POSSIBLE ATTEMPT TO OUST ISRAEL, SAYING SUCH A MOVE WOULD NOT BE IN ARAB INTEREST. GIVEN STRONG U.S. VIEWS AGAINST EXPULSION, U.S. WOULD DO EVERYTHING IN ITS POWER TO OPPOSE SUCH A MOVE, INCLUDING USE OF THE VETO POWER. SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD POLARIZE THE SITUATION ONCE MORE AND BENEFIT NEITHER ISRAELIS NOR CONFIDENTIAL

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ARABS. SISCO SAID ARAB CAUSE BEST SERVED BY HAVING U.S. CONTINUE TO PLAY ACTIVE AND IMPARTIAL ROLE IN SETTLEMENT EFFORTS. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, ARMS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MILITARY SALES, PEACE TALKS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE109693
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/INS:DKUX:EI
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750165-0089
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197505101/baaaajhu.tel
Line Count: 146
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <03 NOV 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: PFOR, IN, US, XF, (KAUL, T N)
To: NEW DELHI INFO TEL AVIV
CAIRO
USUN N Y
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006